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thirty feet, and then darted into a small patch of brush near by. The nest was placed in a natural hollow in the stump and held six very handsome eggs. It was beautifully made, being composed of cedar bark with a lining of many different colored feathers. I was some time in taking this nest, for I removed the entire section of the stump in which it was placed, and the actions of the owners contrasted strongly with those of the Winter Wrens. The latter, as usual, never gave any sign that they were alive, but both male and female Vigor's Wrens protested for all their name implied. Their note was a harsh deep "chuck," far louder than I should ever credited to so small a bird.

But the male decided it was not worth so much trouble, and soon flew to the top of a bush where he sang until I left. Again I was surprised at the volume of sound, the note resembling that of *Anorthura h. pacifica* in a general way, but being many times louder and greatly lacking in delicacy of fiber. I listened for a full quarter hour, as he made very short intervals between songs, and then turned homeward, having completed one of my favorite trips among the birds.



### Chipmunks.

The observations of Mr. Williams at Independence Lake as recorded in the Sept.-October CONDOR were a surprise to me, as I had never suspected the chipmunks of harming birds, nor did I think they were carnivorous, though I had been told that the larger one, Say's Chipmunk, would sometimes kill and eat the Large-eared Chipmunk, but having seen many cages of pets which contained both species dwelling together in peace, I doubted the carnivorous propensity of *T. sayi*. These are the species which are found at Independence Lake.

Scarcity of food may have been the cause of their exceptional (?) behavior at Independence Lake which, like other

damp localities in the Sierras, at 7000 feet altitude, or approximately that, is subject to frequent summer frosts. The past summer was an unfruitful one in these mountains from about 6,500 feet upward. The sunflower, gooseberries, seeds of the lupines, acorn of the dwarf oak, in fact all seeds and berries, with slight exception, were destroyed by frost before they matured.

Birds are unaccountably scarce in the timber belt of the Sierras and also in most of the agricultural districts of California. My belief has been that birds which nest on the ground oftener succeed in rearing their young than those which build in bushes and trees. I have seen at least a hundred nests of the junco and can only remember one that was disturbed by bird or animal, the exception being a nest that contained four young which were killed by a gopher snake. The majority of these nests were between 4,000 and 5,000 feet altitude and were built in the forest where the smaller chipmunk is abundant, but below the range of Say's Chipmunk.

I think the tree squirrels (*S. fessor* and *S. hudsonius fremonti*), the former the large Grey Squirrel and the latter the Red Squirrel, destroy a great many nests and eggs in some localities. I hope the causes of bird scarcity in California will be ascertained and removed if possible. I think some are climatic.

L. BELDING.

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Mr. William W. Price will conduct a party of boys and young men on a natural history and exploring trip to the Lower Colorado River from Yuma, Ariz., southward through Mexico to the Gulf of California. The party left Yuma Dec. 21 and are expected to return about Jan. 5. It is safe to assume that, with Mr. Price as their leader and guide, they will find the outing both profitable and immensely interesting.

We learn that W. Otto Emerson of Hayward, Cal., has been appointed a member of the A. O. U. Committee on Bird Protection for California. Mr. Emerson's active work in this line is well known, and the appointment is happily deserved.